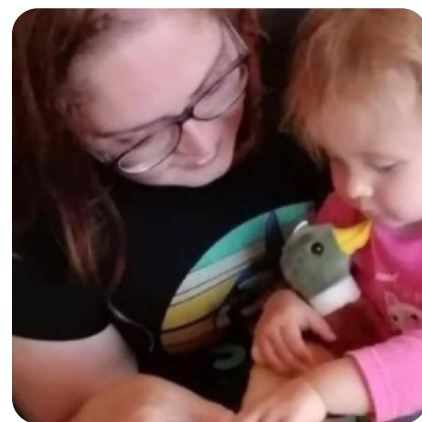


50 **before you're** five **things to do**

Songs and Stories



Using 50 Things to Do to support
your child's development through
songs and stories

www.cambspboro.50thingstodo.org

#6 Rhyme Time



All children, from the very youngest babies enjoy singing and rhymes. Babies and young children love to hear the sound of their parent's voice, in fact babies in the womb can recognise their mother's voice between 24 and 27 weeks, so it really is never too early to start.

Enjoy rhymes together and your child will have the best start in developing their listening and talking (and later their reading and writing). Rhymes include traditional nursery rhymes, such as Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, finger-rhymes, such as Round and Round the Garden, and Incy Wincy Spider, and whole-body action rhymes, such as Heads, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes.

Experts in literacy and child development have discovered that "If a child knows eight nursery rhymes by heart by the time they are four years-old, they are usually among the best readers and spellers in their class by the time they are eight years-old." Rhymes are fun. Rhymes help children's language development, they learn new words and start to understand the rhythm of language. Rhymes help children's speech development, they develop the muscles in their mouth and tongue making the different sounds. Sharing rhymes together helps provide a secure bond between parent and child.

How to do it

Start with rhymes you know well, if you do not know any you can find ideas on the internet. If you are excited by the rhymes, your child will be excited too. You might think you cannot sing, but you can. You do not need to know lots of different songs or rhymes, young children like the same ones again and again and again.

#7 Making Music



Young children show a great deal of curiosity. They love to make a noise and see the reaction it gets. Help everyone from babies upwards to channel their musical genius with everyday household items or even make some of your own.

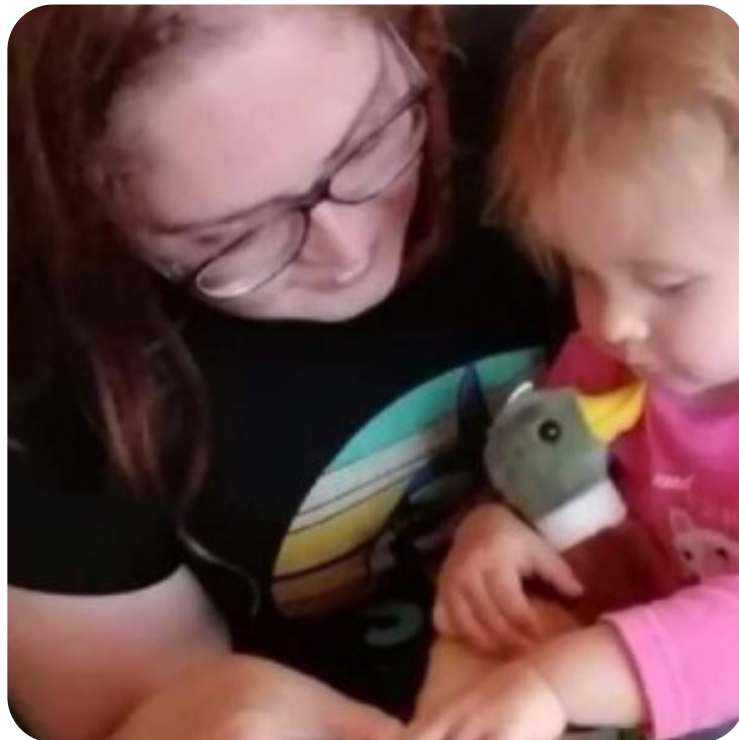
Making and listening to music supports the skills needed to listen, helps brain development and language development, and also brings joy into the day. Music helps babies and young children's brain development, particularly those areas of the brain concerned with language acquisition.

When making music together, your child is learning to listen carefully. Taking turns when playing is like having a conversation. Playing with instruments (and making them) supports children's hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills (skills which they need for their writing at school).

How to do it

Find some old pots, pans and bowls, in fact anything safe (which will not break) that you can hit. We are not talking about expensive musical instruments here. Show your child what to do by using your hands or a spoon to play. Let them copy you and encourage them to make their own music. Once they have discovered the different sounds they can make, you might want to try making your own instruments with old boxes and tins to extend your music-making. Sing your favourite songs and play along. Talk about the different sounds you can hear. Talk about the beat and the rhythm as your child plays. In turn-taking games, talk about my turn and your turn. In movement games dance to the music and freeze when the music stops, get your child to understand silence.

#10 Sharing Books



Sharing books is a wonderful thing to do with young children. They can hear about people and places they may never know about. It can get their imagination running. Plus, it helps with developing their language skills. Start young from just a few months old and share books often with babies, toddlers and young children. BookTrust, the UK's largest children's reading charity, encourages book sharing from birth, and even before.

Why not join the local library? You can stay and share stories with your child, or take some of the books home. All for free. Story and rhyme times are also free to attend.

Studies show that when adults regularly share books with children in the preschool years, they learn language faster, enter school with a larger vocabulary and become more successful readers in school.

How to do it

Sharing books means talking about the book, not just reading the story. Encourage children to join in. Make comments about the pictures "I can see a tiny egg." See if your child can find different things on the picture "Where's the strawberry?", or you could ask some simple questions "What can you see...?" or simple comments "Ah, Look."